

Small Group Discussion Guide:

Integrity, Wisdom, & God's Favor (Daniel 1:8-21)

Sunday Sermon, Sep 27, 2026

Getting Started

This guide works through the sermon's central idea: **God honors faithfulness.**

Read aloud: Daniel 1:8-21.

Leader's note: The questions follow the sermon's four movements: Daniel's resolve, his posture, his discernment, and God's response. You don't need to get through all eight questions. Follow the conversation where the group is engaged.

Discussion Questions

Daniel's Resolve (v. 8)

1. Daniel accepted a new name, new clothes, and a new education without complaint, but he drew the line at the king's food. Why do you think that was the place he chose to stand firm? Where do you sense that line in your own life, between cooperating with the culture around you and refusing to go along?
2. The sermon described resolve as deciding to follow the Lord *before* a trial arrives, and shared a few of Jonathan Edwards' personal resolutions. Have you ever made a deliberate decision like that? What conviction has God given you that you want to stay faithful to?

Daniel's Posture (vv. 8-10)

3. Daniel *asked* for permission rather than staging a protest, and he treated the official over him with respect. What does it look like to hold a conviction with humility and care toward someone who has authority over you? Have you seen this done well, or done poorly?
4. Of the many young men in that room, only four took this stand, and the sermon noted the others were not necessarily unfaithful. How do we give grace to other believers who reach different conclusions on gray-area questions, while still holding firm where Scripture is clear?

Daniel's Discernment (vv. 11-16)

5. Instead of flatly refusing, Daniel proposed a ten-day test that honored both the steward and God. Where in your work, family, or community might a wise, creative approach like this open a door to faithfulness without compromise?

6. The sermon said a subtle, subversive approach to culture is more winsome than the alternatives: conforming, being combative, cloistering away, avoiding conflict, or longing for the past. Which of these do you find most tempting? What would patient, intentional faithfulness look like in that area?

God's Response (vv. 17-21)

7. God gave the four young men even more learning and skill, and the king found them ten times better than his other advisers. The sermon suggested excellence can be a sign of God's grace and kindness. Where have you seen God strengthen the gifts you already have when you have been faithful with them?

8. Verse 21 shows Daniel still in Babylon sixty-five years later, probably not the story he would have chosen. The sermon said faithfulness is about living for God *in* the story, not controlling the outcome. Where are you tempted to be faithful only if things turn out the way you want? What would it look like to be faithful anyway, trusting that God's mercies are new this morning?

Closing

Take-home resolve: Invite each person to name, silently or aloud, one conviction they want to be resolved about this week.

Pray together: Thank God that he honors faithfulness and forgives seasons of failing at it. Ask the Holy Spirit for the power to live faithfully in the story each person is living, and for courage and peace as you go.